

REMARKS

Claims 1-12, 22-24, 26 and 28-31 are currently pending in this application. Applicant is amending herewith Claims 1, 6, 8-9, and 22. Applicant submits that support for these amendments can be found generally throughout the specification. Applicant is canceling herewith Claims 23-24, 26, and 28-31. In view of the request for continued prosecution, applicant submits that entry of these amendments is appropriate. Following entry of these amendments, Claims 1-12 and 22 will be pending and subject to further examination.

The Office Action

Claims 6 and 8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Claims 1, 2, 7, 8 and 10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated and unpatentable over the patent to Fetherston. Claims 1-3 and 7-9 were rejected as being anticipated and unpatentable over the patent to Van Auken. Claims 1, 2, 5, 6, 24 and 26 were rejected as being anticipated and unpatentable over the patent to Roberts. Claims 1-5, 7-9 and 22 were rejected as being anticipated and unpatentable over Altshuler et al. Claims 10-12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being obvious and unpatentable over Altshuler et al. Claim 23 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being obvious and unpatentable over Altshuler et al. Claims 28-30 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being obvious and unpatentable over Altshuler et al. in view of Cordani. And finally, Claim 31 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being obvious and unpatentable over Altshuler et al. in view of Cordani and Kubota.

Amendment of Claim 1 Distinguishes Over the Prior Art

Applicant is amending Claim 1 herewith so as to refer to a laminar mat suitable for use as a mouse mat. It is applicant's view that none of the prior art relied upon by the rejection could be considered as being suitable for use as a mouse mat. Fetherstons and Van Auken are directed to skis which are readily evident as not being suitable for use as

a mouse mat. Altshuler, on the other hand, is directed to a non-slip floor covering which again cannot be considered to be suitable for use as a mouse mat. The same can be said for Roberts, which is directed to a decorative wall tile, and to Cordani, which is directed to an oil absorbent mat.

Claim 1 is being further amended herewith so as to more clearly define the nature of the upper and lower layers. The upper layer is now referred to as being textured by a mold during molding of the mat; whereas, the lower layers is described as being provided with an external screen printed non-slip coating. These features are neither shown nor suggested in Fetherston or Van Auken. Roberts appears to show a textured upper layer; however, no reference is made to the provision of a non-slip coating on the lower layer. Certain embodiments shown in Roberts refer to the attachment of a backing board 38 to the rear surface of the tile. However, this cannot be equated either literally or functionally to a screen printed non-slip coating. The embodiment described with reference to Fig. 1 of Altshuler describes a non-slip upper surface to the article; however, this is provided by the dispersion of frictional particles 16 over the upper surface and not by virtue of any screen printing operation. It would appear also that this non-slip coating is incorporated in the upper surface article during molding thereof and not after molding as is required of amended Claim 1.

The Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 6 and 8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. The rejection states that the meaning of the term "card" is unclear. Applicant is amending herewith Claims 6 and 8 to change the word "card" to the word "cardboard." It is submitted that the term cardboard is the American equivalent of the British term "card." Accordingly, applicant submits that Claims 6 and 8, as amended, are now clear, and requests that the rejection of Claims 6 and 8 under 35 U.S.C. § 112 be withdrawn

The Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1, 2, 7, 8 and 10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated and unpatentable over the patent to Fetherston. Claims 1-3 and 7-9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated and unpatentable over the patent to Van Auken. Claims 1, 2, 5, 6, 24 and 26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated and unpatentable over the patent to Roberts. Claims 1-5, 7-9 and 22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated and unpatentable over Altshuler et al.

Applicant is canceling herewith Claims 24 and 26. Therefore, with respect to those claims, the present rejection is now moot.

Applicant is also amending herewith Claims 1, 6, 8-9, and 22, as discussed above. Applicant submits that the amendment of these claims clearly overcomes the rejection based on the foregoing reference. Therefore, applicant respectfully requests that the rejection of Claims 1-10 and 22 under 35 U.S.C. § 102 be withdrawn.

The Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 10-12 and 23 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being obvious and unpatentable over Altshuler et al. Claims 28-30 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being obvious and unpatentable over Altshuler et al. in view of Cordani. Claim 31 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being obvious and unpatentable over Altshuler et al. in view of Cordani and Kubota.

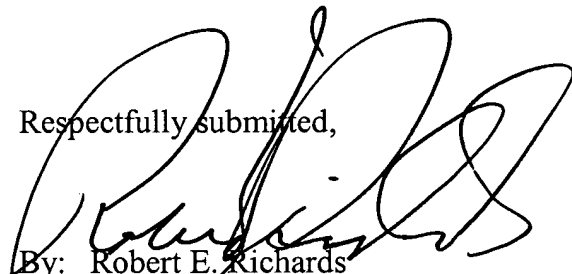
Applicant is canceling herewith Claims 23 and 28-31. Therefore, with respect to those claims, the present rejection is now moot.

Applicant is amending herewith Claim 1, as discussed above. Claims 1-12 are dependent claims that depend from Claim 1. Applicant submits that the amendment of Claim 1 clearly overcomes the rejection of Claims 10-12 in view of Altshuler et al. Applicant further submits that Claim 1, as amended, distinguishes over Altshuler et al. Therefore, applicant respectfully requests that the rejection of Claims 10-12 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 be withdrawn.

Conclusion:

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the present application in view of the foregoing amendment. Applicant submits that all claims are now in condition for allowance. Such action is courteously solicited. Applicant further request that the Examiner call the undersigned counsel if allowance of the claims can be facilitated by examiner's amendment, telephone interview or otherwise.

Respectfully submitted,



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